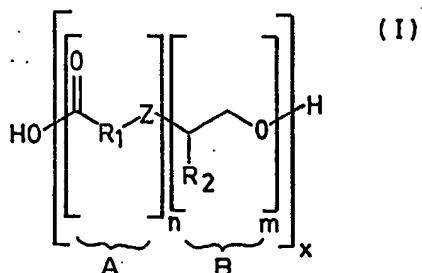


**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (ORIGINAL) A functionalizable polymer of the formula I :



wherein:

Z is -O- or -NH-;

R<sub>1</sub> represents a non-functional backbone of a hydroxy acid or amino acid derived from a cyclic ester or diester or cyclic amide or diamide monomer (A);

R<sub>2</sub> represents a non-functional chain derived from an epoxide monomer (B), said chain ending with a graftable hydroxy or carboxylic group;

n is the number of units derived from the monomers (A);

m is the number of units derived from the monomers (B); and

x is equal to n+m;

the ratio m/x ranging from 0.005 to 0.30.

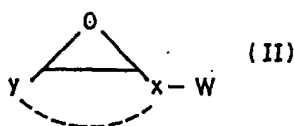
2. (ORIGINAL) The functionalizable polymer of formula I as claimed in claim 1, wherein R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub>, n, m and x are selected so that the average molecular weight of the polymer ranges from 1,000 to 50,000.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The functionalizable polymer of formula I as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein Z is -O- and the monomer A is selected from the group consisting of lactones, dioxanones and dioxanediones.

4. (ORIGINAL) The functionalizable polymer of formula I as claimed in claim 3, wherein the monomer A is selected from the group consisting of caprolactone, glycolide, dilactide and glycolic lactide.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The functionalizable polymer of formula I as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein Z is -NH- and the monomer A is selected from the group consisting of lactams and dilactams.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The functionalizable polymer of formula I as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the monomer B is selected from the group consisting of the epoxides of formula II:



wherein:

X is a non-functional chain optionally containing one or more heteroatoms but no ester or amide link;

W is -CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>OH or -CH<sub>2</sub>COOH; and

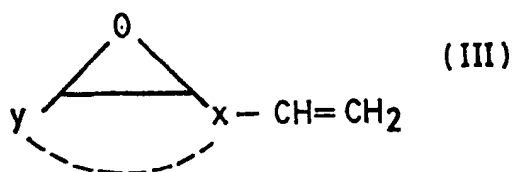
Y is H, alkyl or phenyl;

X and Y being optionally linked to each other as shown in dotted lines.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The functionalizable polymer of formula I as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the monomer B consists of alkyl glycidyl ether.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A process for preparing a functionalizable polymer of formula I as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, comprising the steps of:

a) reacting at least one monomer ~~A as defined in claim 1, 3 or 4 (A)~~ with at least one epoxide of formula III



wherein X and Y are defined as in claim 6 is a non-functional chain optionally containing one or more heteroatoms but no ester or amide link and wherein Y is H, alkyl or phenyl, in the presence of a catalyst;

b) subjecting the polymer obtained in step a) to an oxidation to convert the  $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}_2$  groups into corresponding  $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$  groups; and

c) optionally subjecting the polymer obtained in step b) to another oxidation with a Jones mixture to convert the  $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$  groups into corresponding  $-\text{CH}_2\text{COOH}$  groups.

9. (ORIGINAL) The process of claim 8, wherein:

step a) is carried out with a tin catalyst at a temperature higher than  $100^\circ\text{C}$  under inert atmosphere.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The process of claim 8 ~~or 9~~, wherein:

step b) is carried out under mild oxidation conditions.

11. (ORIGINAL) The process of claim 10, wherein:

step b) is carried out by hydroboration at low temperature.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The process of ~~any one of claims 8 to 11~~ claim 8, wherein the polymer obtained after each of the steps a) to c) are recovered and purified prior to being subjected to the next step.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A functionalized polymer consisting of a functionalizable polymer of the formula I as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 7, claim 1 or prepared by the process as claimed in any one of claims 8 to 12~~, to the graftable hydroxy or carboxylic groups of which has been grafted a compound selected from the group consisting of:

ligands specific to cellular receptors;

lipids;

peptides;  
polyethers;  
polyacrylates;  
natural polymers;  
polyosides;  
antigens or antibodies;  
salen; and  
cyclodextrins.

14. (ORIGINAL) The functionalized polymer of claim 13, wherein the compound grafted to the polymer of formula II is a biomedically or pharmaceutically active substance.

15. (ORIGINAL) The functionalized polymer of claim 14, wherein the compounds grafted to the polymer of formula I is a ligand specific to Selectine E.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The functionalized polymer of claim 13 ~~or 14~~, which is in the form of nanospheres to facilitate delivery of the active substance.

17. (NEW) A functionalized polymer consisting of a functionalizable polymer of the formula I prepared by the process as claimed in claim 8, to the graftable hydroxy or carboxylic groups of which has been grafted a compound selected from the group consisting of:

ligands specific to cellular receptors;  
lipids;  
peptides;  
polyethers;  
polyacrylates;  
natural polymers;  
polyosides;  
antigens or antibodies;  
salen; and  
cyclodextrins.